/153 cont./

755 him with a series of magic remedies and medicinal plants which have been fully described in the article /154/ previously cited. Also at the present time it is not uncommon for them to call in the services of a white doctor, either in Uribia, the capital of the peninsula, or in the near-by cities of Venezuela, such as Maracaibo, or in the neighboring Colombian department of Magdalena.

But their culture possesses a traditional institution that
●756 answers these requirements: the shaman, whose essential
755 activity has been fully treated in the work which we cited at
177 the beginning of this chapter and to which we refer the reader. This institution, perhaps the most powerful in Guajiro culture, has been losing value for various reasons already studied in the article we have cited, but it still occupies an outstanding place within the social and cultural whole, to the point that when an Indian is gravely ill, his relatives think immediately of the shaman as the most advisable means of curing the sick man, as this functionary (the shaman) possesses considerable magic powers due to his having been selected by the benevolent spirits to be their intermediary in their frequent contacts with the community. For this reason, to obtain the aid of the shaman is to have in one's favor the friendship and co-operation of the well-wishing spirits who can save the patient from death,
[763] because for the Guajiro, illness is caused by the action of pernicious spirits who want to cause harm and to avenge themselves.

755 The first necessary condition for the shaman to take charge
[431] of the cure is the gift to him of a piece of jewelry, an ornament of gold, generally a necklace, /the value of/ which should be in relation to the family status of the patient as well as the standing of the shaman. A second condition is the tacit submission to the shaman's demands and instructions.

The shaman, once he has decided to take charge of the cure of the patient, goes to his house and submits the sick man to the customary ritual. His practices, which last several

2: Pineda Giraldo SC13 Goajiro SC13

●756

[For information about shamans see category 116, pp. 9-23, 24-47, 54, 58-62, 77-78, 81, 84-85, 119, 127-128, 172]

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The medicine men liked to have a good drink before a seance

A piache, or wise woman, curing a boy by burning him with a red-hot arrow head

[755
516]

[Facing p. 113]

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CHAPTER 10

Conjuration of Spirits

How does one become a piache? Not of one's own volition. Those worthy are chosen by the spirits and receive their summons in a supernatural way. The wanuru spirit itself visits the chosen one, who may be a boy or a girl. Women are often sorcerers in Guajira. One of them gave us this account of how she received her summons.

First she saw in front of her eyes a fall of shooting-stars, a rain of gold; then everything went dark and she sank to the ground. The first warning usually comes like that. Some days later she had violent attacks of shivering, cold sweats and vomiting. As she lay in her hammock more dead than alive, she heard a voice say: 'Eat manilla or you will die.' (Manilla is a kind of chewing tobacco which the Indians now obtain from white traders, but in default they have recourse to tobacco leaves. The spirit always orders the person to chew manilla.)

The woman's relations hastened to get some manilla and at the same time sent for a piache, who would have to decide whether the girl really had received a call or not.

Another woman told us that her first symptom was thoroughly prosaic: constipation. During the night she dreamed that the spirit came and led her by the hand to a big plantation. She awoke trembling, but then heard a voice ordering her to eat manilla. By chewing tobacco she recovered completely. Her mother, who was herself a piache, at once began instructing her in her profession.

After the summons comes the apprenticeship. The magical tobacco seems of great significance for the medicine man or woman to be, and even for the fully trained. The

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medicine men of South America make great use of tobacco, and at first it was mostly reserved for them. The chewing of tobacco can cause an intoxication, through which a magician can put himself into a state of ecstasy. Of course, the nicotine has a violent effect on the children whom the spirit orders to eat manilla, and it is not easy to say whether the symptoms accompanying the summons are due to abuse of tobacco or to other infirmity. It is said that those called to be piache always fall ill. The Indians are fully convinced that dreams have significance for their actions. While asleep they receive instructions which they seldom dare fail to carry out. The youth or girl who is summoned receives his or her revelation either in dreams or while in a hysterical state. The Indians consider them to be possessed by the spirit, and the piache for whom they send then has to decide whether the spirit really has visited the boy or girl, or not. If it is not possible to fetch a piache immediately, they will sometimes have to make do with a sooth-sayer, an *outschi*, who though not a proper medicine man, at least can 'smoke tobacco', that is to say, can foretell future happenings, find strayed animals, etc. They are often well patronized. The outschi swings a firebrand in the air while puffing at a cigar—magical tobacco again!—and the trails of smoke tell him what he wishes to know. He can merely confirm that there has been a true revelation, that the spirit visited the young person and entered into him or her. A sooth-sayer can go no further than that, but that gives the parents the comforting assurance that the piache, who has to be summoned in any event, will not come in vain. The piache has no objection to a sooth-sayer making a diagnosis.

The attacks from which the candidate suffers both at his selection and when he becomes fully qualified, lead to a trancelike state. It is characteristic that a dead piache may not be buried until after three days and nights, so that it is quite certain that he is dead and not just that his soul happens to be away. A cataleptic state and hallucinations are characteristic of future and practising medicine men alike.

There is no avoiding the call to be a piache once it has

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been confirmed by sooth-sayer and piache. The person selected must learn the profession and practise it. Otherwise, certain death awaits him, for the spirit will not suffer his decisions to be neglected.

Often parents cannot afford to send for a piache, for those who convey the request have to give him a necklace of gold beads. This may mean that the novice's family has to ask well-to-do relatives to pay the fee. When he arrives, the piache examines the candidate and stuffs some manilla into his or her mouth. When he sees that it is beginning to take effect, he intones a monotonous song. As soon as he stops, the novice must proclaim his desire to become a piache and have it granted. He is selected by the spirit, but he does not yet know anything. The apprenticeship then begins.

The piache shuts himself into a suitable hut together with the novice, and there they must stay, hidden from the world, for a month or more. The apprentice is not supposed to be seen by anyone during this time. No one may go in and interrupt the seance. The piache sits on his stool of light wood shaped like an animal. He wears a head-dress made of wool and places a similar one on the novice's head. He then begins singing songs, swinging rattles and making all the gestures, movements and conjurations that he uses to call upon and move the spirits. His instruction continues day after day, sometimes by night as well. He has to keep to a certain diet. Roast maize in particular is usually prescribed. Now and again spirits appear and talk with the novice, encouraging him, not least by expounding how great are the advantages of being a piache, and how rich the presents he receives.

One day the spirit announces that the first period of instruction is over and the novice ready for examination. This is an intermediary examination, for the instruction is not complete. So far it has only included spells and magical songs, and the novice has no knowledge of herbs and poisons. (Knowledge of medicinal herbs is common to all by family tradition.) The songs, gestures and spells have been repeated till the novice knows them all perfectly.

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756 During this period of confinement the novice is always having to chew tobacco, and it is during periods of nicotine-[776] intoxication that the spirits appear to him. After his first examination the novice is given a diadem and a rattle, *maraca*, as symbols of his new dignity.

The novice's family must now arrange a dance and sacri-[535] fice sheep or goats. A chichamaya is performed during one or two days and nights. Those taking part are ceremoniously painted. The animals are slaughtered and offered to the spirits who partake of them during the night. After that the dancers can eat. No one, however, may touch the meat till [782] it has lain, wrapped in leaves, at the spirits' disposition and thereafter been dedicated by the piache, who spits tobacco juice upon it and pronounces spells over it.

The apprenticeship, of course, is not over, and again the novice is shut away from the world. Now comes a period of instruction in the art of chewing tobacco, that is to say, how, where and when that is to be done and what are correct ways to summon spirits, cure illness, make rain, protect cattle, halt epidemics and much more that the medicine man may be called upon to do. The instructing piache transfers his spirit to the apprentice, and exhorts the former not to start by trying to cure adults, but to practise on children. The spirit also forbids erotic association.

After a few months the apprentice will be ready to qualify. Large quantities of maize beer are then prepared and invitations sent out.

756 While the guests are drinking and dancing the novice 787 sits, still isolated, practising. The spirit comes and orders him or her to send for a beast of certain colour and with specific markings, which is to be sacrificed to the spirit. When that has been done, and it must be done, the spirit demands some necklaces of gold beads—any number up to ten—which have to be hung up in the novice's hut. As soon as these have been collected with the help of relatives—often as a loan—the spirit pronounces himself satisfied and informs them that the novice's apprenticeship is over. He or [533] she can now begin to practise. But, the spirit adds, there

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must be no intimate association with women, not even with a wife! 756 787

The spirit has not merely accepted the novice as a piache, but has entered into him, possessed him and will accompany him during all his magical seances. As a person a piache is of no importance, but when the mighty spirit fills him he becomes the equal of the real spirits. He cures the sick exclusively by supernatural means, with the help of the spirits. Of real medicine he knows nothing. According to the Indians' ideas there are no natural causes of illness and death, which are ascribed entirely to dangerous spirits. [833] [755] [753]

When a piache is summoned to cure a sick person, he must be given a gold necklace or some other valuable gift. He brings with him two maraca rattles, the usual magical instrument of the South American Indians, and a stool shaped like an animal. If necessary, he can sit on some other stool. One of his magical instruments is small pellets made by someone with a great knowledge of herbs and formed like goat's excrement, which are intended to attract the spirits.

While the piache is in his trance everyone must remain silent, otherwise the spirit may take fright and leave the piache's body, at which he will fall to the ground in convulsions and be ill. The piache chews tobacco all the time, and with the resultant magical saliva he smears his patient's body and often the walls and roof of the hut as well. He sings a song, invoking the spirit and sucks the parts of his patient's body that hurt, thereby drawing out the cause of the illness: poisoned spirit arrows that have been shot at the sick person's body. [755]

Usually the piache is alone with his patient, but sometimes he will allow a near relative to be present and help. The songs the piache sings are about how his own spirit is seeking everywhere for the patient's. The demon of the illness has gone off with it and holds it prisoner. When the demon is found, it is forced to release the patient's spirit against a ransom. For this the piache demands cattle, goats or sheep with special markings or ornaments, cloaks, etc.

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● 756 787 If cattle, these are tethered beside the hut where the seance is being held; if ornaments they are handed to the piache.

If the piache does not receive what he demands—or rather what the spirit demands—attacks compel him to stop treatment. If the patient recovers, the piache retains the gifts on behalf of the spirit; but if the patient dies, then he is not supposed to get anything. Sometimes, however, he apparently keeps his fee on various pretexts—threats that the spirit might be angry, etc.

The piache observes his patient closely during treatment. An experienced medicine man will perhaps see that the patient has scarcely any hope of recovery and will pronounce him doomed.

During these seances the spirits often speak with the piache about the life to come. They tell him that in another existence he will come to a land with many villages that he [775] has never seen before, in a countryside well watered by blue rivers—a glorious prospect from the Guajiro point of view. It seems that the spirits are here speaking of the piaches' special heaven. Ordinary Indians, perhaps, have to be content with a less well-watered paradise. If the patient recovers, the piache orders a chichamaya dance. The maize beer for this is prepared either by chewing or by adding raw sugar, [534] *panela*. Those taking part stream in as soon as the drum, the only instrument, begins to sound. Nobody is invited; people just come as they wish. In the houses of the well-to-do they will be regaled with beef, one or more cattle being slaughtered for this. All will be in their finery. The dance will last one day or more, as the piache orders. The piache then washes his patient, who must still keep indoors.

756 When a child falls ill, the parents will often consult some neighbour who dabbles in fortune-telling to find out what the cause is. It will be cheaper to let her try, than at once to call in a professional sooth-sayer or a piache. The old woman will often burn the child with a red-hot needle or arrow-head, which in certain abnormal mental states, perhaps could provide a beneficial shock. The woman will often

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accuse an animal of spreading the disease. A certain bird is considered dangerous, spreading, as it flies over the hut, bronchitis and coughs, which in the first place attack the children. A child's illness is often ascribed to something that happened to the mother during pregnancy. If a child gets a pain in its stomach, the wise woman may say that this is because a spirit ate some of the mother's food before the child was born. To deal with this, duck feathers are burned and the child's behind smeared with ash. In other circumstances it is because a fox has nosed at something the mother subsequently ate. In that case a fox has to be killed and the child given some of its grilled meat, at the same time as the child's behind is rubbed with burned fox-bone. The child will get quite better—if the old woman is right and it was a fox. These women are quacks even in the Indians' eyes, and yet they turn to them first.

If an animal is sick, the piache himself is at once sent for. The cattle are driven into an enclosure and the piache dances round and among them, wearing his head-dress, torso bare, and brandishing his maraca, singing song-spells and spitting tobacco juice upon the animals. After some days of this, the treatment is concluded with a chichamaya dance.

The Guajiro, of course, believe in dreams. During sleep the spirit frees itself and learns things of which it knows nothing while the individual is awake. Because of this it is considered risky to neglect warnings or things of which one has dreamed.

A piache attaches special importance to his dream-experiences and knows how to interpret them. If he dreams that a snake bites someone, it means that that person will be struck by a poisoned arrow. If he sees fire in his dream, that indicates fever, while violent rain denotes the death of some rich Indian. Blood in a dream also means death, and an animal being butchered means that a person of the same age or sex will die. If the piache dreams that an enemy intends to kill a specific individual, he hastens to visit the person to help him. An animal of a certain colour is killed and the threatened individual smeared with its blood—

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that prevents his own from being shed—and after this a chichamaya dance is arranged.

It is not only through dreams that future events can be foretold. There are special sooth-sayers: we have already mentioned the outschi, who deal in prophecy without being piaches. Many real piaches also deal in prognostication, but that is not really their province. The Indians believe in the piache, more than in the ordinary sooth-sayer. 'The piache is always right', they say.

In divination the sooth-sayer also uses a firebrand that he swings through the air, or a lighted cigarette or, sometimes, a knife-edge along which he stares. Whatever the method, the sooth-sayer's spirit has to free itself and go roaming. Let us say that he is to track down a stolen cow. The freed spirit follows its path till it finds it and can say whither it has been taken. As I said, a piache will not treat a patient if he is sure that he is incurable. He often finds out about this by using a firebrand. If it goes out, there is no hope. Sooth-sayers most carefully study the different shapes assumed by the coals, which, to the initiated, are significant.

As with us, there are many amateurs, especially elder women, who try to foretell the future or discover what others are about. Suppose such a woman wants to know where her husband, who is on a journey, is and how he is faring. She takes a cigar of the primitive kind they use there, lights it and pronounces an incantation, asking to be shown what she wishes to know. If the ash turns black, her husband has fallen seriously ill, if the red part splutters it means that he will get gold, that is money. Other signs will reveal that he has associated with some other woman. That can involve the husband in considerable trouble when he returns.

Medicine men have a number of guardian or assistant spirits who advise them, but who also require remuneration for their services. They also warn the medicine men against enemies. Every piache has seven or eight such spirits, each of which is invoked with a special song. The rain demon, Mareiwa, is called in song under the name Fumayule, while

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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the demon of illness and death, Wanuru, is called Jirarai 756
Wanuru is the name of all the spirits of the dead which are 776
many, thus we are obviously dealing here with groups of spirits; and where Wanuru acts as guardian or assistant spirits, they no doubt represent the souls of dead medicine men.

One piache, known as a clever rain-maker, told us that 756
when he needed advice over rain-making, he used to go to 776
the burial place to talk with his dead brother's spirit, the 789
brother having been cleverer at it than he. When a piache has to make rain, he seats himself on his stool as for other functions, chews tobacco, shakes his maraca and rhythmically moves his torso and head. He then begins to sing in a high voice, calling upon the spirits and demanding that they bring rain, for people need it, if they are not to die of hunger. Now and again he emerges and dances round the huts, driving away the spirits that are preventing the rain from coming.

The Indians often first try to make rain without the 789
piache's help, by drumming at night or by firing guns and 821
arrows at the clouds. The drumming imitates thunder and can thus, according to the laws of magic, cause storms. The shooting drives away the spirits that are preventing the cloud from dispensing its rain. This is also what they do at eclipses of the sun, when all burst into tears and shoot at the sky to drive away the evil spirit that is preventing the sun from shining. A piache's own spirit does not interfere in his magic-making, for which he uses none but auxiliary [775]
spirits. It is not till after his death that a piache's spirit can become active and help some other piache.

The piache has to submit to certain restrictions on diet 756
and love-life. He or she must never have extra-marital 834
intercourse and even marital intercourse must be restricted. A female piache must never spend the night with her husband, but merely pay him fleeting visits that should be as short as possible; she must never allow herself to be caressed by him, and must lie quite still and indifferent during [833]
coition. If this is not done, her guardian spirit will be jealous
and angry, and may cause trouble. And, preferably, she 756
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ought not to have children. The spirits can show her various magical tricks to avoid this, but if she should become pregnant, she can count on the spirit's help in labour. Not even the male piache is allowed to partake of love more than fleetingly, almost casually. There must be no real affection involved.

A woman piache cannot practice during menstruation. No piache may eat meat from animals he has received in payment for his services. These, like other gifts, he does not enjoy, but he can give them to his sons. Nor is he allowed to eat meat from animals sacrificed at funerals or such feasts. While invoking or conjuring spirits he should restrict his diet to maize gruel.

A piache can cure all, but not himself. Sometimes, perhaps, a sympathetic spirit may give him a little advice, which will always help; but if he falls seriously ill, he summons a colleague, who performs the usual sorcery. When a piache dies, his rattle, diadem and other attributes are chopped up and buried in some remote and secret place. The dead piache's soul roams like those of all mortals and often clings to the burial place, but it is never alone, being always in company with its guardian spirit. Both can later help a new piache.

The medicine man is thus called to his profession by revelation and no attention is paid to sex, social position or age. Women have been magicians in Guajira from of old, as is shown by their myths. The piache belongs to two worlds: those of man and of the spirits. He has not chosen to belong to them and must continue in both. He is the intermediary between these two worlds, but nowadays his influence is dwindling. As civilization penetrates the peninsula, the part he plays is becoming less and less important.

The first really great piache was Umaralá, of whom the Indians relate the following:

In the olden days there were plenty of piaches who took big fees, but did little. Umaralá made his cures with secret remedies and with songs accompanied on his maraca rattle. He lost his mother early, but was adopted as her own by his maternal aunt, who also considered all her possessions his.

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She was a piache and she loved him dearly. He lived with her in the Jarará district, and he used to go with her when her profession took her on journeys, when he listened attentively to her incantations and songs. 956 123

One day Umaralá became very ill, and not only he. An epidemic spread all over Guajira, and raged worst in the Jarará Hills. He grew better at first under his aunt's cure, but then he had a relapse and grew worse and worse. He lost the power of speech, sometimes consciousness as well, and had convulsions, while his aunt perseveringly performed her magic in the hope of preventing his death. Wondering, he listened to the conversations his aunt had with a spirit during the incantations. The spirit answered her appeals with reproaches, and it was no less a spirit than Jirarai. Distinctly the lad heard him say:

'Either you or your boy shall die.'

The aunt realized that the situation was critical and now—unfortunately not before—she called upon Jumajule, one of the good spirits who used to help her. Unhappily Jumajule could do nothing. He was not able to drive the first spirit she had invoked from her presence. That left the aunt no choice but to deliver herself to Jirarai in order to save her dear foster-son. She laid her maraca on the boy's chest and fell down, dead.

Umaralá rose at once and, weeping, took her in his arms. With him wept the only slave to have survived the epidemic. Together they then wrapped the body in an ox-hide and took it to one of the clan's burial places, where their near relatives lay. Disillusioned and depressed by his dear aunt's death and the ravages of the epidemic among his people, Umaralá withdrew from the world, dwelling in a cabin near where his aunt lay buried and living on what wild roots and fruits he could gather. Occasionally he visited his faithful slave, whose services he had not required since his aunt's death. Each evening he went to the burial place and lit a votive fire on his aunt's grave. One evening the old woman appeared to him, looking just as she had when alive, and said to him:

'Go back to Jarará, fetch my maraca and my head-dress,

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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visit the sick and treat them as I did. Only thus will you find the right way. And you must change your name. Hereafter you shall be called Umaralá.' (Before that he had been called Paurala.)

Umaralá obeyed her command. He began invoking the spirits and healing the sick and soon was renowned all over Guajira for his prowess. Once the mother of a rich family fell sick. They consulted several piaches, none of whom could cure her. In the end they decided to visit Umaralá in the Jarará Hills. Two days and two nights the emissaries had to travel till they came to the famous piache's house. There they found an old man busy spinning yarn of agave fibres. He asked them what they sought, and they replied that they had been sent to find the piache Umaralá and to ask him to look at a woman who had been very ill for a long time.

'We are to give him a necklace of gold beads so that he will not refuse to come and a splendid riding mule for the journey.'

'I am Umaralá,' the old man said, 'and I do not need a riding-mule, nor will I accept your necklace until I have seen and cured the sick woman. Do you ride on, I shall follow immediately. As soon as you get back home, tell them from me that everyone must leave the house where the sick woman lies and that she must be alone all night.'

The messengers returned with this message. The woman was just as ill as ever. Umaralá's instructions were carried out and the patient left by herself. At midnight the sound of horse's hooves was heard. Someone galloped up to the ill woman's house and then came the sound of singing and the rattle of a maraca. Towards morning the sound of horse's hooves was heard again. It grew fainter and fainter. The next day the woman was quite recovered and she lived on for many years.

One morning when the slave came to his master's hut he found him ready to ride off on a splendid mule. He was carefully dressed and had his maraca hanging at his saddle. The slave asked where he was going and his master replied

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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that he was waiting for two men with whom he was going on a long journey. One of these was from Macuira and the other from Parashi. At that instant two horsemen appeared. Umaralá took farewell of his slave and told him that they would not meet again in this world, only in the next, and he enjoined the slave to tell no one of what he had seen or should see, otherwise he would die. The slave was left alone in the hut, sorrowful and wondering. He saw the riders disappear in the direction of the burial place that Umaralá so often visited. The slave then followed. He heard the death-lament, but saw no one. That was Umaralá bewailing his aunt with his friends. The slave returned home and soon became very ill. He told what he had heard and seen and died immediately afterwards.

The slave had noticed that the man from Parashi who had accompanied Umaralá, was dressed in deerskin. This man lived in a little hut and had the power to transform himself into a deer. Several Indians had seen and recognized him. He used to make and sell hammocks and other articles made of bast.

The man from Macuira who had been with Umaralá devoted himself to curing diseases. He used herbs and roots for some and cured others by burning the patient with a red-hot iron point. He was also a sooth-sayer and could make rain. His name was Jururiana.

Once there was a dreadful drought that made many people leave Macuira and go to the savannas. Famine came to the hills. Now people knew that Jururiana could make rain and when he came to a place called Chamaro they flocked round him. In the end, in order to compel him to make rain, they tied him to a post in the sun and told him that they would not loose him until he had brought rain. This he did. After two hours, there was a big shower. The chief Juanito Epiayú was a very good friend of Jururiana and often summoned him when there was a drought, arranging dancing with much drinking and races. Jururiana then made rain.

This rain-maker vanished, none could say how. Another pretended to be Jururiana rejuvenated, but the chief sent for

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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him and found that he could not make rain at all, but was an impostor, so he was driven away with blows and was glad to escape with his life.

Even in the days when the reputation of the piache stood high, the Guajiro would not infrequently seek the help of the famous medicine men of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the so-called *mamds*, in whom many Creoles believed. A Guajiro who could manage to do so would take a sick person there or an article of clothing or some ornament that the invalid had worn. The medicine men of the mountain Indians would use this to diagnose the disease, and the messenger would return with a herbal medicine. The health-bringing plants were broken up and preserved in spirits. People liked to acquire such medicine especially before a child was born; it was then poured into the infant's bath water and the mother drank a gulp of it. The effect of it depended on the magical power of the plants.

The Guajiro themselves used certain plants as medicine. Sometimes these really were effective, but often it was just a question of sorcery. A plant with much milky sap, for example, was laid on a mother's breast if her milk failed. The powers possessed by the mountain Indians of Sierra Nevada were attributed to the circumstance that they possessed the secret of invoking specially powerful spirits, whose essence also permeated the herbal medicines people got from them. The effect of the herbs thus came from the spirits residing in them. Intoxicating drinks acted through the spirits liberated in the process of fermentation; that was a common belief among the Indians.

The Guajiro believed in omens and portents. Various animals foretold misfortune or death. A wild cat wailing round the house at night, a bat that persisted in following one through the darkness, in certain circumstances also a snake beside the house, all portended trouble or sorrow. The Indians paid special attention to the behaviour of a number of birds and interpreted this as indicating the approach of visitors, the imminence of something unpleasant, etc. When they thought they had observed such a

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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726 on equal terms. He then approached the enemy from the left while making quick movements, jumps, and turns, with his legs apart and his knees bent. More recently, according to Ernst (1887 c), war is not declared, attempts being made to take the enemy by surprise.

[797] Wars last indefinitely, sometimes being broken by a peace brought about by an influential "civilizado" or the Capuchin monks, the latter sometimes paying the retribution demanded out of their own pockets.

579 Some tribes, such as the *Cosina* of Serranía Cosina (actually a conglomeration of outcastes rather than a sib), make their living almost entirely by robbery and pillage, destroying houses, stealing cattle, and killing or enslaving their enemies.

LIFE CYCLE

843 **Birth and childhood.**—During pregnancy a woman continues to do her heavy work up to the very hour of delivery. At childbirth, the shaman

844 pronounces various spells over the patient and applies poultices made of

● [156] dried flowers, roots, etc. A large, heavy stone placed over the womb and vigorous massaging bring about the birth. If the placenta is not soon expelled, the woman drinks a medicine concocted by the medicine man. As soon as the child is safely delivered the father serves rum and chicha

[484] to all his relatives. If the pains of childbirth appear when the sib is on the march, the woman mounts and rides ahead so that when the sib catches up the event is practically over. The husband cuts the cord with his machete and cauterizes its ends with a glowing ember. The woman

[854] then continues on the march with the child in a sling on her back. When the permanent camp is reached she washes herself and the child.

851 Baptism is a Christian ceremony which the *Goajiro* have adopted, and

551 most of the Indians are called by Spanish names, as their real names may

177 not be mentioned. Teknonymy is practiced; a parent is addressed by its child's name plus a prefix, nushi or sushi for the father, ni or si for the mother. Thus, a father may be called Nushijuan after a son or Sushijuana after a daughter.

857 At 6 or 7, girls learn to grind salt, pick cotton, and tend the smaller

868 animals; the boys imitate their fathers.

855 Parents are said to show little affection for their children, sometimes

[435] selling them at Sinamaica. They receive $10 or $15 for a child of 8 or 9 years. The purchaser becomes the child's guardian, teaches him the Catholic faith, and keeps him until he is 17 years old. These children

[736 rarely return home. Abandoned children are taken to the San Antonio

797] orphanage, where the girls continue to wear their *Goajiro* dress, but the boys are put into jackets and pants.

881 **Girls' puberty.**—At her first menstruation a girl is isolated in a small dark hut and stripped of all her ornaments. She lies in a hammock, sometimes hoisted near the roof. For the first 2 days she drinks no

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The *Goajiro* believe that after death the deceased in ethereal form wander about the country, their favorite meeting place being in the vicinity of Bahía Honda in the extreme north of the peninsula. There is some evidence that the Indians look forward to a happier existence after death. From this belief in the afterlife stems the practice of mutilating the body of a slain enemy, for once his body is broken and scattered it is not possible to reassemble his soul, and the slayer is protected from a vengeance-seeking spirit.

The dead are highly respected or feared; consequently, it is a serious offense to mention a dead person by name.

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Games.—The *Goajiro* have various athletic sports, such as horse racing, wrestling, and archery. Contestants shoot at a skin ball or a fruit tossed into the air or at targets; they are very accurate up to 125 yards. Tournaments are held in which the contestants pair off, the victor of each round winning an arrow and continuing to compete.

Feasts and dances.—The *Goajiro* are fond of feasts and hold them whenever opportunity offers—at funerals, when they have received their pay for loading salt, at baptisms, or when a person completes his training as a medicine man. Weston (1937) describes a festival held on the last-mentioned occasion. For 2 days the big drum was sounded by relays of players, spreading the news. The dance, practiced beforehand, took place in a circle some 25 feet (7.5 m.) in diameter around which some 200 Indians gathered. A man, nude except for his waist cloth and head band with ornamental plume, with his face painted red in a crisscross pattern, danced backward from a girl dressed in a voluminous robe and wearing a large red handkerchief on her head. The girl attempted to overtake and head off the man, who retreated before her in a circle with a peculiar double step, almost a hop and a skip. As one pair tired another took its place, the dance continuing indefinitely.

Musical instruments.—*Goajiro* musical instruments are few. A calabash filled with stones or peas serves as a rattle for dance accompaniment. The clarinet is about 2 feet (0.6 m.) long, made of telescoped (?) sections of reed with a bell consisting of calabash and a vibrating reed in the mouthpiece. It is side blown. The large drum is carved from a hollow section of tree, 15 inches (38 cm.) in diameter and 24 inches (60 cm.) long, and has both ends covered with sheepskin. It is slung from the rafters, a branch, or from the player's neck. Singing among the *Goajiro* is virtually nonexistent.

Narcotics and stimulants.—To make chicha beer, maize may be masticated by the women and spat into a large earthenware bowl, with water and crude sugar added. After 3 days it is strained and drunk. By another

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273 method the maize is finely pulverized by hammering on a flat stone, instead of being masticated. Beer is drunk in large quantities, as is rum received by trade.

276 Both sexes commonly smoke long narrow cigarettes, which the women make of bundles of 8 or 10 leaves. Formerly, at least in the western portion of the country, the *Goajiro* chewed coca (hayo) with lime, which stained their teeth black. Coca is still grown, but there is no mention of this custom in recent times.

RELIGION

776 *Goajiro* religion is imperfectly known. Mareigua (Maleiwa) seems to have been the Creator and Culture Hero. He caused the first *Goajiro* to emerge from the ground and taught the tribe how to produce fire with a drill. He saved them during the flood by raising the Cerro Pororo where they had taken refuge and by driving the jaguars away. As a Supreme Being he shows some moral preoccupation, in the past having punished those who lived in incest. He sends rain and all the good things which the *Goajiro* expect from nature (Hernández de Alba, 1936, p. 44).

Yoluha (Yorja) has been thought to signify the god of thunder, lightning, and drought, but the term probably does not designate a single deity but bad spirits or ghosts in general. These are feared at night when
776 the sky is clouded; to prevent their inroads the *Goajiro* stretch a thin cord
789 between two poles reaching above the roof. They attach to this cord, at regular intervals, fishhooks which serve to entangle the Yoluha and make their stay unpleasant. Sometimes when sounds coming from the bush are thought to have been made by spirits, the Indians light embers and throw stones at them.

787 The *Goajiro* give considerable importance to dreams. A dream may
438 cause the desertion of a camp, a war, or a consultation with a shaman. The *Goajiro* carry charms which they buy from shamans.

SHAMANISM

756 *Goajiro* shamans (piache) are of both sexes. Aside from their long hair shamans differ little in external appearance from ordinary persons, but their power is reputed to be considerable and people avoid offending them. They are said to cause the heart of a person to stop beating unless they are paid enough.

A shaman keeps his cures secret and divulges them only to a successor, who undergoes a long period of training and who pays his instructor a certain number of cattle. When the training is complete, there is a public initiation with dancing and drinking, at which the novice is seized by fits as demonstration of his new power. The instructor chants spells

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over the novice as he (or she) lies in the hammock twisting and groaning as his spirit takes possession of him, imparting knowledge and power. 756

In attempting to cure, a shaman often causes greater injuries to the patient; permanent blindness may result from his effort to cure eye injuries with caustic powders or to remove foreign substances with horsehairs or cactus spines. Tuberculosis is treated by inducing expectoration and prescribing a meaty diet. Dysentery is cured with herbal medicines. Well-chewed tobacco or tobacco-laden spittle rubbed over a painful area is a common method of therapy. If the medicine man effects a cure, which he frequently does, he is rewarded with gifts of cattle, rum, etc. No attempt is made to treat smallpox, the victim often being abandoned to his fate. 755

Some practitioners who are not exactly shamans divine by burning a bundle at the end of a stick or by examining the bottom of a bottle, i.e., by crystal gazing (Hernández de Alba, 1936, p. 42). 791 787

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